



**Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.**

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**Testimony  
Submitted to the  
Education Committee  
February 21, 2012**

**SB 24 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS**

The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education appreciates the opportunity to offer our comments on the provisions of SB 24, An Act Concerning Educational Competitiveness, that relate to certification, tenure, performance evaluation and support, collective bargaining and professional development.

Many of the provisions of this bill address the key reform issues recently identified by 6 organizations with a significant interest in public education – Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA), Connecticut Council for Education Reform (CCER) and ConnCAN.

CABE strongly supports the provisions of this bill which address changes to teacher and administrator preparation, certification, evaluation and support. Specifically, CABE supports the move to make certification and evaluation more focused on demonstrated performance and ability to raise student achievement.

The State Board of Education recently approved a set of guidelines developed by the state Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC) for teacher and principal evaluation and support systems that include multiple measures of educator effectiveness, with a clear focus on student learning, and a support system to build educator capacity. It is critical that resources be made available, both at the State Department of Education and at the local level, for implementation and support.

CABE strongly supports the proposal to provide that teacher tenure be earned and maintained based on satisfactory evaluation results. The time is right for Connecticut to address these issues. According to data from the Education Commission of the States, as of August 2011, 18 state legislatures had modified at least some element of their tenure or continuing contract policies. Many of these states have integrated performance evaluations that include educators' impact on student outcomes into the tenure system. Since tenure is a product of legislation, there is no legal obstacle to including evaluation as a component of tenure. SB 24 still contains the due process protections associated with tenure which protect teachers from unreasonable dismissal, by providing that dismissal must be based on a showing of ineffectiveness or unprofessionalism. In addition, the changes proposed in this bill are in accordance with recommendations from the National Council on Teacher Quality.

In addition, educators who consistently receive the highest evaluation ratings should be eligible for recognition, including promotions along a career ladder and salary increases, as provided in this bill. CABE also supports the proposed changes in professional development, which would be targeted to improve teacher and administrator effectiveness in raising student achievement.

We would urge you to include an additional element not currently addressed in SB 24, which would modify the current seniority based system in the case of reductions in force, and provide that those layoffs be guided primarily by evaluation results.

We appreciate your attention to these issues.